

March 24, 2004

The Reverend Jane Wood
Jerusalem Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church
21 Wood Lane
Rockville, MD 20850

HAND DELIVERED

Re: Application HDC2003-000284

Dear Rev. Wood:

As discussed at the Historic District Commission (HDC) meeting of March 18, 2004, staff has compiled a table summarizing the information that Jerusalem Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church was requested to provide in support of the Church's demolition permit application. The table shows what has been submitted to date and information that is still outstanding. This information is requested to help the HDC to determine if the Church's application for demolition can be found to comply with the special circumstances provided by State law under Article 66(B) Section 8.10 of the Maryland Code:

Section 8.10.

In the case of a site or structure considered to be valuable for its historic, archaeological or architectural significance, the commission may approve the proposed construction, reconstruction, alteration, moving, or demolition despite the fact the changes come within the provisions of Section 8.09 of this subtitle if:

- (1) the site or structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the county or municipal corporation;
- (2) retention of the site or structure would cause undue financial hardship to the owner; or
- (3) the retention of the site or structure would not be to the best interests of a majority of persons in the community.

Construction of a major improvement project has been one reason that the Church has cited in support of the demolition permit. Therefore, the list of requested information is a compilation of the requirements for a demolition permit and information needed to evaluate the feasibility of the major improvement program.

The HDC and staff evaluation will be based on whether the proposed major improvement program can be accommodated without demolition of the historic parsonage and if the proposed major improvement program is feasible: i.e. it meets the zoning ordinance requirements, there is financial evidence of the ability to implement it, it has a reasonable expectation of meeting the guidelines for new construction in an historic district, and it otherwise satisfies the State law requirements for Section 8.10(1).

Additional submissions and evidence showing undue financial hardship as provided in Section 8.10(2), and whether the demolition of the historic parsonage to construct the proposed major improvement program is in the best interests of a majority of persons in the community as provided in Section 8.10(3) should be submitted as soon as possible.

Incomplete	Complete	Information
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(1) Form of ownership of the property.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roger Blunt is not licensed as a professional engineer in Maryland		(2) A report from an engineer licensed in the State of Maryland as to the structural soundness of the structure and its adaptability for rehabilitation. Any dangerous conditions should be identified. (If the building is structurally unsound and not repairable, then it is not reusable and the issue is moot.)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need name of provider company and telephone number		(3) Cost of the proposed demolition or removal and an estimate of any additional costs that would be incurred to comply with standard conditions of approval such as documentation of the building before demolition
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have verbal quote, not written.		(4) Fair market value of the property to be presented through an appraisal by a qualified professional expert. All appraisals obtained within the previous two years by the owner or applicant in connection with the purchase, financing or ownership of the property.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Need itemized cost statement on repair of fire damage and reuse of the building.		(5) An itemized breakdown from a professional experienced in rehabilitation as to the economic feasibility of rehabilitation or reuse of the existing structure on the property.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Records to prove financial hardship such as budget, debt service, use of insurance funds and income/expenses have not been submitted.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amount paid for parsonage lot has been received.	(6) Amount paid for the property, the date of purchase, identification of the seller(s), a description of the relationship, if any, between the owner of record or applicant and the person(s) from whom the property was purchased, and any items of financing between the seller and buyer. (Include the settlement sheet.) Remaining balance on any mortgage or other financing secured by property and annual debt service, if any, for the previous two years.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not needed	(7) If the property is income-producing, the annual gross income from the property for the previous two years; the itemized operating and maintenance expenses for the past two years, and depreciation deduction and annual cash flow before and after debt service, if any, during the same period.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not needed	(8) Price asked and offers received, if any, within the previous two years. Most recent assessed value of the property and real estate taxes

Incomplete	Complete	Information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		(9) The commission may request other information specific to the project. The HDC has requested:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		(a) Information on the proposed major improvement project including a site plan and sufficient information to determine compliance with the code requirements for public assembly facilities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		(b) Written evidence of financial ability to complete said project
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		(c) Explanation why an approximately 2,400 square foot "New Life Center" in addition to an approximately 1,050 square foot extension of the Church basement, as presented at the March 18, 2004, HDC meeting cannot be accommodated on the Church property with the parsonage in place. This assumes that it may be possible to assemble the lots and rezone the property.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		(d) A statement of how the proposed major improvement program will be a substantial benefit to the county or municipal corporation.

For your convenience, I have attached a copy of the Rockville HDC Demolition Policy which details the interpretation of State law and the items which would help the HDC make a decision.

You should be aware that State law (Section 8.09(b)) indicates that if the HDC finds that no economically feasible plan can be formulated, the commission shall have ninety days from making that finding to negotiate with the owner and other parties in an effort to find a means of preserving the site or structure.

Staff remains ready and willing to assist the church on questions with the demolition permit application and new construction procedure. In addition, staff would like to arrange for an update of the MGV estimate to repair the structural damage to the parsonage based on current conditions and would like to have access to the parsonage for this purpose. I can be reached at 240-314-8233 or by email at ckebba@rockvillemd.gov.

Sincerely,

Cynthia N. Kebba

cc: HDC
Arthur Chambers, Director, Community Planning and Development Services
Robert Spalding, Chief of Planning

Attachments: 1. Timeline
2. Rockville HDC Demolition Policy including Article 66B, Sections 8.09 and 8.10 of the Maryland State Code